

Montana Commission on Community Service
AmeriCorps National Service
Request For Proposal (RFP)
Planning Grants 2007



- ❖ Thank you for your interest in the AmeriCorps National Service planning grants. This packet contains the information you requested pertaining to the application process for 2007/08 AmeriCorps planning grants through the Montana Commission on Community Service. Application information is included in the Planning Grant Application Instructions.
- ❖ Eligible grantees include nonprofit organizations in compliance with IRS Section 501(c)(3) regulations; schools; institutions of higher education; state agencies; subdivisions of the state including cities, counties, and municipalities; Indian Tribes; or a partnership or collaboration of any of the above entities.
- ❖ Individual technical assistance is available to all prospective applicants from May 14, 2007-May 18, 2007. Please contact the Montana Commission on Community Service (MCCS) at 406/444-9077.
- ❖ Grant applications are due by 4:30pm May 21, 2007 at the Montana Commission office (1 unbound original, 4 copies and one electronic copy on computer disk.) Applications submitted by mail must be received on that date, not postmarked by that date. Late submissions will not be accepted. Faxes will not be accepted. The Commission's address is P.O. Box 200801, Helena, Montana 59620.
- ❖ **For additional information, contact Will Soller at the Montana Commission on Community Service at 406/444-9077 or wsoller@mt.gov**

The Montana Commission on Community Service seeks to renew the ethic of civic responsibility in Montana by encouraging all citizens to engage in full or part-time service to the state. Established in 1993, the Commission is a state agency funded primarily by the Corporation for National Service.

OVERVIEW

AmeriCorps is a community service program that provides full and part-time opportunities for participants, called members, to serve their communities through community organizations and agencies. AmeriCorps programs strive to meet real community needs in the areas of education, the environment, public safety, other human needs, and most recently homeland security. AmeriCorps is locally driven and community based, with a specific mission to: Get Things Done, Strengthen Communities, and Member Development. During their term of service, most AmeriCorps members receive a living allowance; full-time members are eligible for health care and childcare if needed. Members who successfully complete a term of service receive an Educational Award.

AmeriCorps is one of many National Service programs funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency created under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. Under this same legislation, states were required to establish community service commissions to provide a coordinated response to National Service programming in the state. Prior to the Act, the Montana Legislature approved the Governor's Advisory Council on Community Service, now the Montana Commission on Community Service, as a statutory agency in 1993.

Planning Grant Concept

Recognizing the value of the planning grant process for organizations interested in exploring the viability of creating and sustaining an AmeriCorps program to meet their needs, the Commission is accepting planning grant applications in the development of a strong AmeriCorps program design.

The purpose of planning grants is to bring programs to the verge of implementation so that they may compete successfully for operating assistance in the following grant cycle. The Commission will make planning grants available to eligible applicants

that have identified a sound concept for a national service program, but that require resources in order to plan, develop, and prepare the program for implementation.

Commission expectations for all planning grants are as follows: 1.) organizations are expected to develop and submit a fully realized AmeriCorps grant application within 12 months of the end of the planning grant; or 2.) submit a report outlining the reasons why it was decided not to pursue a full AmeriCorps grant.

Commission Priorities

While the Commission will accept for review any proposal for a planning grant, the Commission has identified as priorities: the Governor's Initiative on Math and Science; Youth with Disabilities; Reservation Communities; Poverty/Low-Income; Aging/Baby Boomer Population; and Rural Montana, with rural defined as outside of major population centers in the state (Missoula, Bozeman, Helena, Great Falls, Butte, Billings, Kalispell) where AmeriCorps programming is not present or area is underserved by AmeriCorps programming.

Budget Requirements

Grant applicants may request up to \$50,000. Requested funds may not exceed 67 percent of the program's total costs. The grantee's share of these costs is 33 percent and may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions.

Grants Process

The Commission will review and select planning program proposals. The following timeline will be followed:

5/14/07-5/18/07	Individual technical assistance call window open for prospective applicants.
5/21/07	Grant applications due by 4:30pm at MT Commission office.
May 2007	Applications reviewed and rated.
June 2007	Successful proposals sent to the Corporation.
August/September 2007	Final awards issued, projects begin.

National Focus Areas

The Corporation has identified four strategic focus areas that meet critical needs of our nation. Any application should address one or more of these areas. They are:

1. Mobilizing more volunteers. The Corporation will invest in organizations that can effectively recruit, train, manage, and use volunteers who will ultimately have an impact on the success of their program.

2. Ensuring a brighter future for all of America's youth. The Corporation will invest in organizations that provide caring adults as mentors for youth from disadvantaged circumstances, and opportunities for

young people from disadvantaged circumstances to serve their communities.

3. Engaging students in communities. The Corporation will invest in organizations that implement effective strategies for connecting their school, faculty, staff, and administration with their communities through service and volunteering.

4. Harnessing baby boomers' experience. The Corporation will invest in programs that plan to capture the talents, skills, energy, and experience of baby boomers and older Americans to meet local and national needs.

eGrants

In addition to a paper submission, those applicants who are chosen for funding will be also be required to complete an online application. All applications are required to be submitted online to an electronic system called eGrants. For more information, please contact Will Soller at 444-9077.

<http://www.cns.gov/egrants/index.asp>

If your organization is successful and asked to submit an online application, you will need to provide a DUNS number. For information on how to obtain a DUNS number, please visit: http://www.dnb.com/US/duns_update/

“Everybody can be great because anybody can serve” – Martin Luther King, Jr.”